

VLR- 3/17/81 NRHP- 9/23/82

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
 Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Guthrie Hall

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number VA Route 719

N/A not for publication

city, town Esmont

☒ vicinity ofcongressional district Seventh
(J. Kenneth Robinson)

state Virginia

code 51

county Albemarle

code 003

3. Classification

Category☐ district☒ building(s)☐ structure☐ site☐ object**Ownership**☐ public☒ private☐ both**Public Acquisition**☐ in process☐ being considered

N/A

Status☒ occupied☐ unoccupied☐ work in progress**Accessible**☐ yes: restricted☐ yes: unrestricted☒ no**Present Use**☐ agriculture☐ commercial☐ educational☐ entertainment☐ government☐ industrial☐ military☐ museum☐ park☒ private residence☐ religious☐ scientific☐ transportation☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Ms. Maryann MacConochie

street & number Guthrie Hall

city, town Esmont

N/A vicinity of

state Virginia 22937

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Albemarle County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Charlottesville

state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Virginia Historic Landmarks
Commission Surveyhas this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1978

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Guthrie Hall is situated in a clearing along the Green Mountain near the village of Esmont. The broad south lawn overlooks terraced fields and woods. Guthrie Hall is a seven-bay, 2½-story house on a raised basement. An imposing structure, the house is constructed of concrete faced with quartz rocks, giving the illusion of random-course stone. The whole is covered with a standing-seam sheet metal roof with a copper wash pierced by shed-roofed dormers on the north elevation and pedimented dormers on the remaining sides.

The building consists of four dramatically different elevations. The facade's (north) main block is divided into three parts and faces a rectangular courtyard framed by a stone wall. A broad elliptical arch spans the central section sheltering a two-story recessed entry reached by broad concrete stairs with a turned baluster rail. The arch is a very distinguishing feature, one not seen in similar form anywhere else. An exterior stone chimney rises up through the center of the space. Pedimented gable ends with a plain frieze and deep molded cornices with dentil blocks house twin entries encased with simple architrave trim. Asymmetrical Ionic colonnades extend from each end; the east colonnade which connects with a two-story kitchen and servants' quarters was enclosed ca. 1950, while the unaltered west colonnade joins a porte-cochere.

The south elevation has a two-story Roman Doric portico with three dormers that open onto the portico roof. A Doric entablature is carried across the facade and on the east-west elevations. The center glazed entrance door is framed by a pediment, while the flanking windows have cornices. A concrete balustraded terrace envelops the rear elevation and extends to the side (east) elevation where it surrounds a conservatory. The conservatory, or sun porch, has glazing set between Ionic columns covered by a slight balustraded roof.

In contrast to the preceding elevation, the west side of the house is restrained. It is distinguished only by a central two-story pavilion centered under a pedimented dormer.

While Guthrie Hall's exterior elevations are varied, the interior is symmetrical. The center block of the house is dominated by the "great hall" flanked on the east by a dining room and on the west by an office and library. The colonnades extend to the rooms that formerly functioned as service areas.

The "great hall" (45' x 35') has seven-foot-high recessed oak panels. The ceiling displays massive rough-hewn chestnut beams with simple chamfering intersected by chestnut joists. An inlaid border parquet floor further decorates the room. The fireplace on the north wall has a recessed-panel surround and a high shelf and cornice with dentil-block molding. An arcade consisting of heavy paneled piers supporting segmental arches creates a passage along the front (north) wall connecting the side rooms.

The dining room is treated with an exaggerated wainscot and baseboard below a cornice with egg-and-dart and dentil moldings. The plaster strapwork ceiling was added ca. 1930. The fireplace is set off-center in a projecting chimney breast accented by fluted pilasters with a Georgian-style mantel.

The library and office continue the treatment of the hall; in addition, there are open shelves in both rooms and a walk-in safe in the office. A small reception room leads from the west colonnade to a narrow stair hall with an enclosed half-turn stair with paneled wainscoting.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Ca. 1901

Builder/Architect

Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Guthrie Hall is perhaps the largest and most architecturally individual of the numerous country mansions that resulted from the influx of plutocrats into Albemarle County around the turn of the century. With its porticoes, loggias, quadrant wings, and curious wide-arched entrance, the massive rock-faced house combines Georgian Revival, Palladian, and rustic influences. Guthrie Hall was erected ca. 1901 for John Guthrie Hopkins, a self-made copper magnate who came to Virginia to pursue his hobby of restoring decayed old houses. Although Stanford White was early credited as being the architect, it is more likely that the house's appearance is due mainly to Hopkins himself, working in consultation with his engineer. A few years after it was completed, the house was described as "a palatial Colonial residence," located in the "delightful Piedmont Section of Old Virginia, the birthplace of American aristocracy and genuine oldtime Southern Hospitality."¹

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

John Guthrie Hopkins (1854-1955) was a native of Scotland who came to America as a thirteen-year-old immigrant, working his way up from a farmhand to a mining millionaire. His investment in the Arizona Copper Company in 1888 enabled him to retire a rich man ten years later. Typical of many outsiders who came to Albemarle County in the early 1900s, Hopkins was lured by the county's scenic countryside and sociable life style. The area also offered Hopkins the opportunity to enjoy his hobby, restoring aging estates. He first settled near Esmont where he restored the Dabney farm, today known as Rin-Ran. After completing the work, he chose to construct for himself an entirely new house freely interpreting aspects of Georgian and other Classical styles. He engaged a structural engineer, Fred Kennedy, who employed in Guthrie Hall's stately, if somewhat weighty, shell the most up-to-date structural system and facilities. A sales brochure of ca. 1905 praised the house for its "full concrete structure, quartz granite-covered walls; massive hewn oak beam ceilings; guest rooms; all-tiled bath rooms; mahogany-finished office, with large built-in combination safe; railroad station; water system; electric light-steam heating plant; billiard room; bowling alley; manager's house; stable-garage..."²

Hopkins sold Guthrie Hall in 1906 and settled in Loudoun County, where he continued his interest in restoring houses. The estate passed through a succession of owners, none keeping the place for more than a few years. In 1939 the property was acquired by a Danish nobleman, Baron John von Liedersdorf, who gained a reputation in the county as an adventure-some art dealer. The present owner, Maryann Jessup MacConochie, purchased Guthrie Hall with her late husband, Phillip Jessup, in 1968.

CL/MTP

¹A. Lee Knowles Agency, "Guthrie Hall," (Real Estate Pamphlet, Staunton, Va., ca. 1905).

²Ibid.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Albemarle County Deed Books, 133, 152, 157, 183, 199, 205, 217, 243, 449.
Land Tax Books, 1902.

Chamberlin, Bernard. Charlottesville, Va., Interview, January 16, 1981.

Knowles, A. Lee, Agency. "Guthrie Hall." Real Estate Pamphlet. Staunton, Va., ca. 1905.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 26 acres

Quadrangle name Esmont, Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	1 7	7 1 0 2 6 0	4 1 9 1 9 5 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 7	7 1 0 3 0 0	4 1 9 1 4 3 0
E	1 7	7 1 0 1 4 0	4 1 9 1 8 6 0
G			

B	1 7	7 1 0 4 2 0	4 1 9 1 6 8 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 7	7 1 0 0 6 0	4 1 9 1 3 4 0
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on the W side of VA 719 about 2700' NW of the intersection of VA 719 with VA 715; thence extending about 500' SW to 650' contour; thence about 2700' along said contour, first going SW and then N to the W side of private drive; thence about 800' NE along said side to W side of VA 719; thence about 1000' SE along said side of VA 719 to point of origin. (See Continuation Sheet #1)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date March 1981

street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3144

city or town Richmond state Virginia 23219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director
title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date MAY 10 1982

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

Area:

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

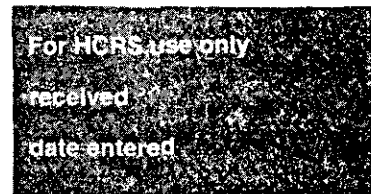
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Guthrie Hall, Albemarle County, Virginia

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7

Page 1



7. DESCRIPTION

Nine rooms are located on the second floor. The top story is unfinished except for two rooms located under the north pediments. The space originally was intended for a gym or dance hall. The exposed beam construction is continued through the cellar, which originally contained a bowling alley, billiard room, wine cellar, and other rooms.

The drive and terraced north lawn are overgrown with low bushes and trees, while the wide south lawn has been kept clear, providing a vista to the southwest.

MPM

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated land, consisting of approximately twenty-six acres, is a fraction of the 350-acre estate. The boundaries are drawn to include the natural 650-foot contour which contains the main house and surrounding lawns and provides the site with scenic vistas to the southwest.

COMMONWEALTH
DIVISION OF MINES
JAMES L. CALVE

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